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## LIKE SHIFTING SANDS

Santu Mofokeng

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## LIKE SHIFTING SANDS

### Abstract

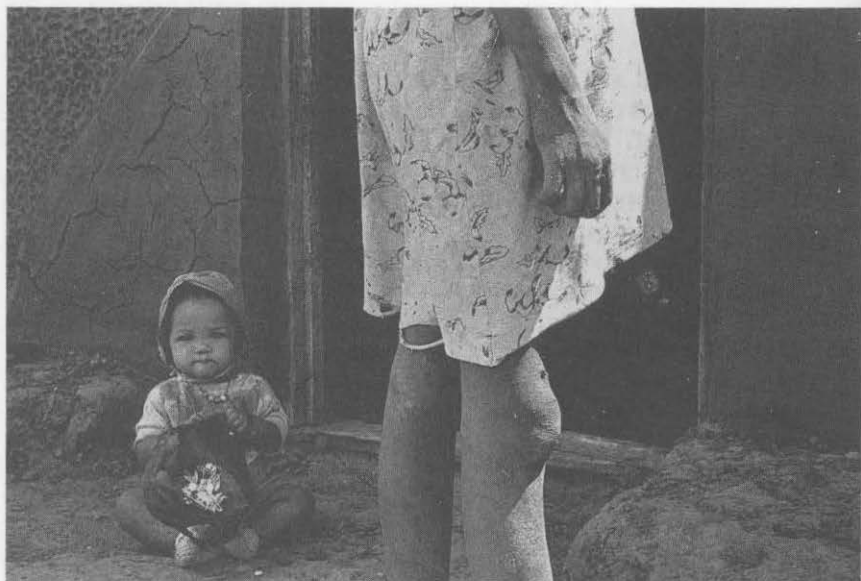
These photographs are from Santu Mofokeng's exhibition Like Shifting Sands which focuses on the life and realities on the farms and in the rural towns in Transvaal. The exhibition, in the words of the photographer, attempts to depict 'ordinary Black South Africans going about the day-to-day business of living'. In the process Mofokeng establishes his subjects as actors, neither as pseudoheroic, nor as helpless victims. At the heart of this work is a sensitive and compassionate insight into the low-key but profound resistance inherent in the 'basic decency of marginalized and deprived people'.

# Santu Mofokeng

## LIKE SHIFTING SANDS

These photographs are from Santu Mofokeng's exhibition *Like Shifting Sands* which focuses on the life and realities on the farms and in the rural towns in Transvaal. The exhibition, in the words of the photographer, attempts to depict 'ordinary Black South Africans going about the day-to-day business of living'. In the process Mofokeng establishes his subjects as actors, neither as pseudo-heroic, nor as helpless victims. At the heart of this work is a sensitive and compassionate insight into the low-key but profound resistance inherent in the 'basic decency of marginalized and deprived people'.

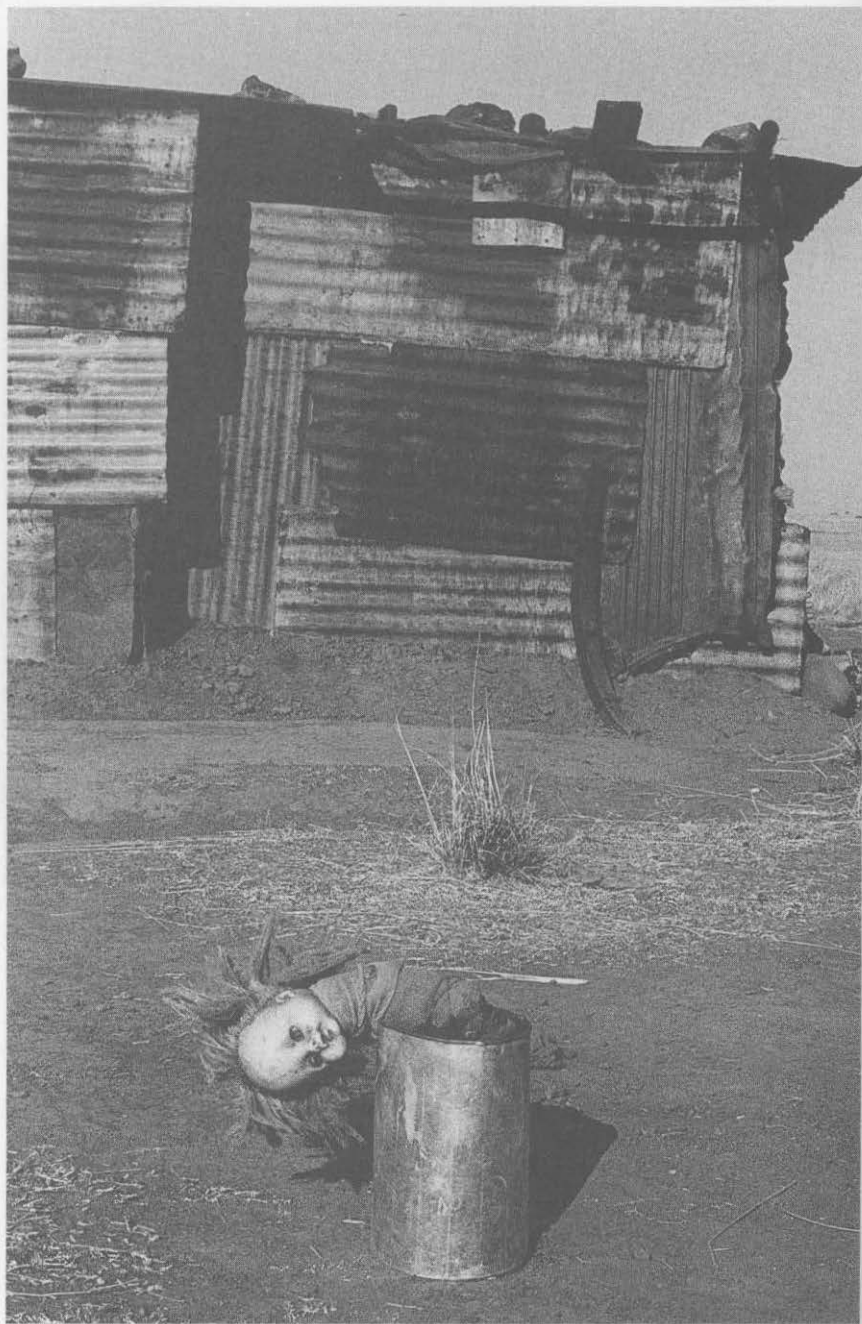
This selection of images probes the presence and silences of the black population ensnared as labour tenants on white farms in the rural areas of the South-Western Transvaal. His focus is on a farm named Vaalrand in Bloemhof and on the adjacent town of Zevenfontein. These rural settlements on the banks of the Vaal River constitute the matrix of his careful probe into the way in which the agricultural cycle is synchronized with the imperatives of labour exploitation. Mofokeng's images reveal what cannot pass in silence like shifting sands.



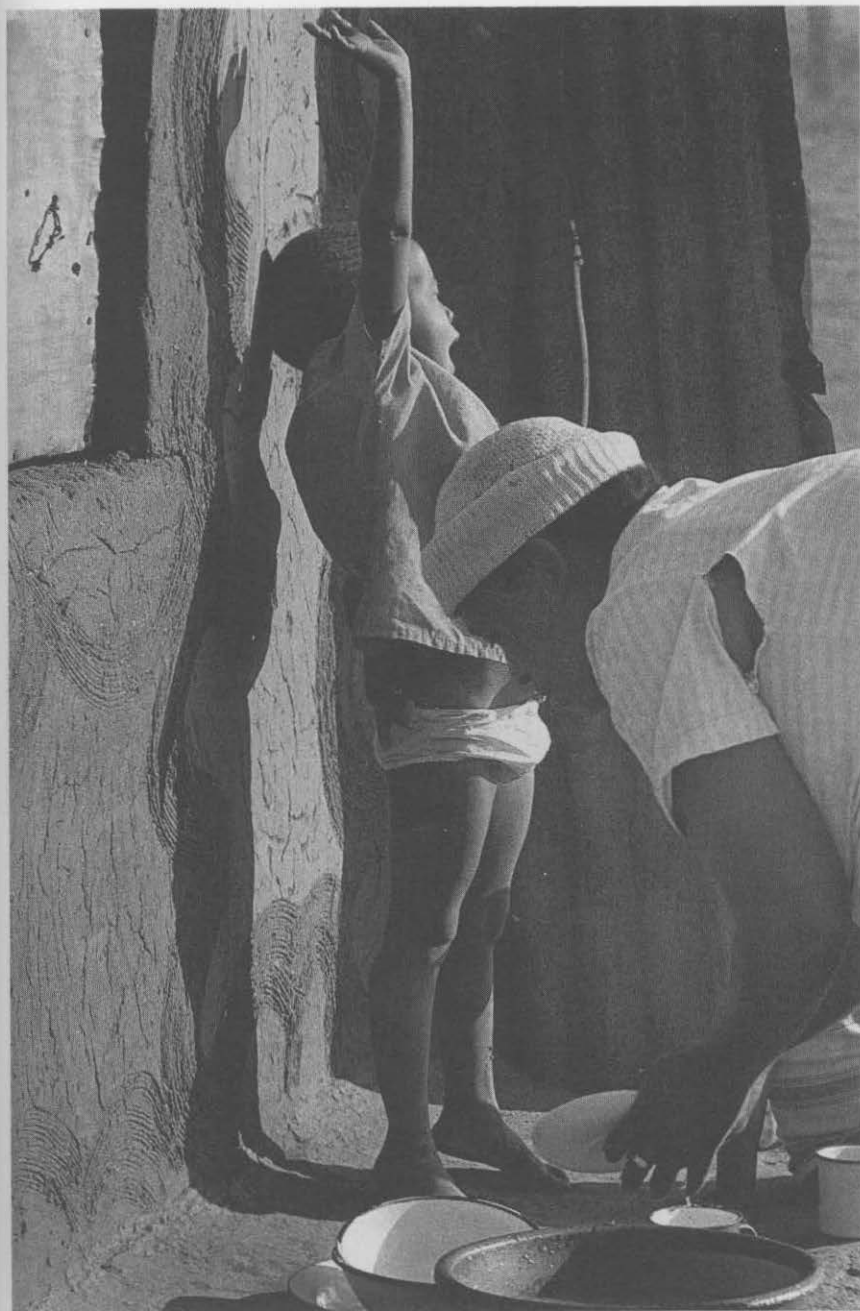
Fina Moss (seated) and her cousin, Kebueng Morgabi (12 years old),  
Vaalrand, Bloemhof



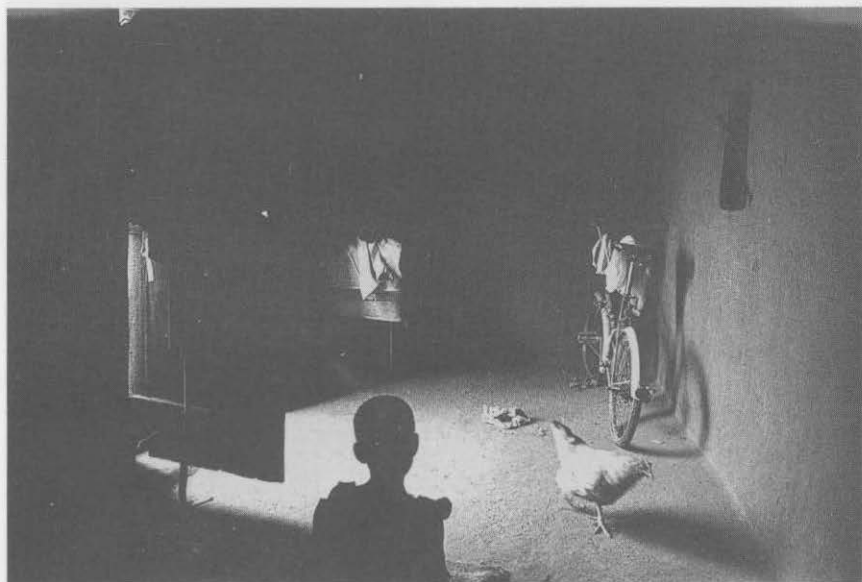
Paul Dihtshi, at the shebeen, Vaalrand.



Limbleless doll – Jakkalsfontein.



Another day, Vaalrand, Bloemhof.



Family bedroom, Vaalrand, Bloemhof.





Outhouse, Klippan, Klerksdorp.



Koos Maine washing his face from a hubcap, Vaalrand, Bloemhof.



Sunflower harvest, Klippan, Bloemhof.